

the natural birth ; 2. the spiritual birth of water and the Holy Spirit ; 3. the birth of the resurrection into a life of glory.

This regeneration is spoken of by St. Peter, in an active sense, ("God hath begotten us again to a lively hope:") and in a passive sense, ("being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God," i. e. by the words used in the form of baptism, or by the word preached, conducting men to faith and baptism.) These texts speak of the new birth, as a transient thing, once performed, but always retaining its virtue. When the phrase "born of God," is used to denote a permanent state, it is to be understood of a person who *has been* born of God, and abides entirely in that sonship or spiritual state ; and such is the import of the kindred expression, "born of a woman." It is God who regenerates or makes the grant ; man merely receives, or is acted upon ; though sometimes he is active in qualifying himself, as in the case of adults ; and sometimes entirely passive, as in the case of infants. All the blessings of this regeneration may be reduced to two, namely, remission of sins, and a covenant claim to eternal happiness. These blessings may be forfeited, or entirely lost, if the person revolts from God, either for a time or for ever ; and such person is no longer in a regenerate state, as to any saving effects ; but the original grant of sonship, nevertheless, remains unimpaired, to be applied upon the person's repentance, in the event of which, he will require not to be regenerated, but to be renewed. The two integral parts of complete regeneration are, the grant made over to the person, and the reception of the grant, the latter varying according to the condition of the recipient, the former remaining always the same.

II. Renovation is a renewal of heart and mind ; in adults, it is a capacity for regeneration, rather than regeneration itself ; in infants, for the time being, it has no place at all. In adults, it may be, and should be, both before, and in, and after baptism. Preventing grace goes before, producing faith and repentance, which are qualifications previous to baptism, and necessary to render it effectual : in baptism, the Spirit, as it were, fixes his abode with the person, and if his motions are complied with, after the baptism, the renovation continues and improves through the whole life.—Therefore, though no Christian is exhorted to be regenerated, there are several exhortations to renewal ; e. g. "Be